

# THE ACTIVIST



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## **KIWI RAIL SICK LEAVE DEDUCTIONS**

Members recently alerted the RMTU to the fact that KiwiRail has unilaterally commenced deducting a full days sick leave for a half day absence. The scenario is a worker comes to work feeling a bit unwell and works until the mid-shift break and decides to go home as they are too unwell to continue. We contacted KiwiRail and asked why this had occurred. It transpired that KiwiRail had altered their payroll programme and unilaterally initiated the change in approach to deduction. KiwiRail have advised that this had all been a misunderstanding and they would immediately "put things right".

If you have been caught out in this change then please register a pay query with KiwiRail?

## **NORTH TUGZ UPDATE**

The CA for our members at North Tugz has recently been renewed for a further 2 years. An additional week's leave is added as "Shift workers leave" a clause added to reflect Trade Union Education Leave and a working party is to be established to consider changes from a draft Fatigue Risk Management Report that has been conducted on the North Tugz operation. It was really good to have both Don Molloy and Tony Nyberg as the delegates, thank you for your invaluable input.

## **LPC MEMBERS MANDATE BRANCH EXECUTIVE TO PUSH FOR EXPANDED COVERAGE IN FORTHCOMING BARGAINING**

A mass meeting of LPC RMTU members, held last week, voted overwhelmingly in support of their Executive's bid to expand the coverage of the RMTU-MUNZ Collective Agreement with the Employer.

More than 80% of members voted in support of seeking to change the coverage to include workers employed 'by' LPC, rather than 'at' LPC. This means that workers employed at the Woolston inland port and the new metro port out at Rolleston would be covered by the bargaining due to start this month, and if we're successful, will fall under any new collective agreement.

It's our belief that this will future proof our member's industrial strength and minimise the ability of the Employer to by-pass Lyttelton in the event of a dispute. Unless we expand the coverage the Employer will be able to use the metroport as a springboard to ship cargo from other ports, just as Ports of Auckland did during the dispute with MUNZ. Because sympathy strikes are outlawed in New Zealand this is a very effective way of hamstringing unions, as the bosses are very quick to injunct when the law is on their side.

By bringing metro ports into our collective agreement we protect the right to strike and future proof our industrial strength.

Some members were concerned this will mean they would have to go and work at

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Woolston or Rolleston, but their fears were allayed when it was pointed out that coverage of a collective agreement and job location are different things. For example, none of our KiwiRail members who have a fixed job location can be forced to work elsewhere, it only happens by agreement.

We're now sitting down with our brothers in MUNZ and preparing to initiate bargaining for our collective agreement.

## CTU TELLS SELECT COMMITTEE WORKPLACES MUST BE MADE SAFER

The CTU has today made a strong oral submission to the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee on the Health and Safety Reform Bill.

"It is possible to turn around the terrible record of health and safety in this country, but this will only be possible if all the pieces of the jigsaw are put together." CTU President, Helen Kelly said.

"We know that workers have a critical role to play in making workplaces safe. Worker voices need to be heard and taken seriously through formal processes within the workplace. Worker representation in decisions about workplace health and safety adds insight and value which can save lives." Kelly said.

"It is likely that the 29 men who were killed in the Pike River mine explosion would be alive today if better health and safety regulation had been in place." Kelly said.

"I have 28 reports pinned to my wall in my office of forestry workers killed in NZ forests in the last 5 years. Not one refers to a health and safety representative system despite many in firms large enough to have required them by law. All would have benefitted from one. Not one of these employers can show that workers genuinely having an official role to play in their own, and their workmates, health and safety would lead to abuse - or even really be clear

about what that abuse might be, underscores to us one of the reasons why NZ workplaces are so dangerous." Kelly said.

"We want to highlight that the regulation document recommends removing the right of farm workers to have access to housing made of permanent materials with cooking facilities and heating and lighting in every room. It is very concerning that recent investigations by labour inspectors found two-thirds of farmers were in breach minimum employment rules. We are very aware of the increasing use of migrant farm workers and how vulnerable they are to exploitation on short term work arrangements. Farm workers deserve some standards in accommodation provision." Kelly said.

## PRIME PORT UPDATE

Prime Port in Timaru's announcement that the sixteen jobs under threat as a consequence of the restructure proposed last month are reprieved is a triumph for common sense.

Prime Port CEO Jeremy Boyes has resigned and the restructure has been scrapped.

'Boyes is saying that since his resignation was announced last week they've had a fresh look at the situation and have conceded that the change was unnecessary.' said RMTU South Island Organiser John Kerr.

Under the proposed scheme, announced a couple of weeks ago, the port was going to liquidate most jobs and contract out the work to a couple of companies wholly owned by Port of Tauranga (Quality Marshalling Ltd and Timaru Container Terminals Ltd), which recently acquired a half share of Prime Port. Prime Port would have become little more than a landlord, clipping the ticket for every container, tonne of break bulk cargo and logs that crossed the wharf, and our members faced being re-hired on lower wages and inferior terms and conditions.

The membership stood together, and no-one applied for the new jobs. As well as that the RMTU commenced legal proceedings as we



**Safety matters**

had real concerns about the amount of information that was being disclosed by the parties involved in the restructure.

Its good pragmatism has prevailed. These workers have been made redundant twice in the last four years and this latest round was a bridge too far for them.

We're now hearing that Quality Marshalling is trying to recruit workers but is still being coy about the terms on which it will do so. The Prime Port RMTU Branch is monitoring the situation closely and advising members that if they are approached they should find out what terms and pay rates Quality Marshalling is offering. After all, no-one in their right mind is going to take a pay cut for a new job and all our members understand the value of being on a collective agreement, another matter that Quality Marshalling seem very coy about.

### STEP UP FOR A STEP CHANGE ON A LEVELLED PLAYING FIELD WITH THE KEY PLAYERS

The spin doctor's love of cliché was in full flow when Port of Tauranga, Maersk and an outfit called Kotahi (a joint venture between Silver Fern Farms and Fonterra) announced a ten year deal as a "step change for NZ international trade."

Yes, 'key players' are going to 'level the playing field' and apparently we're all going to be winners...

A bit of green washing to sooth any concerns about giant ships – they use less fuel you know – and a dollop of this is for your own good for the doubters – we're all going to get rich, just some of us will be richer than others.

Lip service was paid to Lyttelton Port – 'ports pay a key role in the livelihood of local communities' and 'significant volumes' will be retained through LPC. In truth, it's easy to see who the loser is in the free for all that is the New Zealand ports industry. Timaru will be the winner in the South Island and Lyttelton will be the loser.

Long term Port of Tauranga's management only see one winner in the bigger game to be Port of New Zealand (PONZ) on this 'new level playing field' and that's the

shareholders of Port of Tauranga. And having Maersk and New Zealand's two biggest producers of bulk commodities playing alongside them stacks the odds beautifully.

Post the announcement LPC management have gone into a good old fashioned tailspin in our view. Within 24 hours, CEO Peter Davey was issuing a 'don't panic' notice to staff, whilst at the same time saying his port had to boost productivity in this 'very competitive environment'. Meanwhile we hear that "they'd been caught napping and that the RMTU has been right all along" – in a market the size of New Zealand there simply isn't the space for true competition between ports.

And so the latest chapter in this sorry tale is being written and the losers are likely to be provincial ratepayers whose councils have invested so heavily in their ports to woo shipping lines and port workers who will have to fight harder than ever to beat off attacks on their terms and conditions. It's already started at LPC with an invitation to meet the Chief Financial Officer – we don't imagine she'll be as optimistic as Peter Davey was in the Christchurch Press the day before the bomb was dropped by PoT-Maersk-Kotahi. Then the future was all very rosy, now it's looking pretty bleak. A front page headline the next day, together with a three page feature inside slamming LPC's health and safety record, can't have helped.

As we all know when New Zealand management speaks of productivity they mean paying people less to do more not, as Scandinavian and German management do, of investing in skills and capacity to create more value. So, wherever you are working in the Kiwi Ports industry outside Tauranga and Timaru get ready for a fight because your boss will spin this latest move as a crisis and we all know how the bosses don't like to waste a serious crisis when they can use it as a chance to screw workers.

As the RMTU has been saying for many years, the only way out of this mess is to have a national ports strategy that is run for the benefit of all New Zealanders. No chance of that under this John Key lead shambles...



## TOLL TRANZ LINK CA UPDATE

Ratification meetings across the country have overwhelmingly voted to endorse the Terms of Settlement that were negotiated in June by the RMTU negotiators. This includes a general wage increase that delivers at minimum a 4.2% increase. This keeps our members ahead of inflation with a 2% increase for the first year and 2.2% for the second. Tighter controls around the use of temporary staff with a view to developing permanent positions, better access to uniforms and Protective clothing and a change to clause 6.4 to include "all of the union members affected by the proposal" were also agreed. Big thanks must go to your rank and file negotiator delegates Brian Walters, Pat Frelan and Tony Dreaver who worked well to deliver the best possible result for all Toll members.

## C3 NORTHLAND

The RMTU has initiated Bargaining for our members working for C3 at Marsden Point. We have recently welcomed a group of new members who are very keen to move onto a Collective Agreement. We hope to hold the first days of talks shortly and we are looking forward to reporting back positive progress.



## KR WAGEROUND – HARD BARGAINS 2014”

The parties (KR and the RMTU) are due to meet 29, 30 and 31 July in Wellington. During this meeting KiwiRail will table its "claims" for the renewal of the MECA and will commence replying to the RMTU claims. It is rumoured that during this session Peter Reidy and other members of the KR senior leadership team will outline their "vision" for the company to the RMTU. Will the TAP be turned off – that is the question?

## SPANISH EMU'S

The CAF built Spanish EMU's are being seen more regularly on the Auckland network. With any new equipment like this there have been a few bugs in the system but there has

also been several concerns raised by the RMTU members that have taken a little while to sort out. A lack of feedback through the testing of the trains compounded this problem. Fortunately we now believe the ditch lights flash when the horn is used on the high or low tone or when operated by the foot pedal and a procedure has been developed for the correct use and isolation of the Correct Side Door Enable (CSDE). Hopefully by now enough keys have been produced so all EMU qualified members have full sets of keys, as keys sent from Spain seemed to take an extraordinary length time to arrive. The Cab Committee will continue to meet to address any new concerns that are raised as we work through getting each unit signed off fit for service and further discussions to have entertainment radios fitted to these units.

## KIWI RAIL HANG SCAFFOLDING

After concerns were raised at the last KiwiRail Networks Industrial Council management has banned the KiwiRail scaffolding system, known as the 'Hanger System'.

A working group has been convened to examine the safety issues around scaffolding. Barry Rattray, Structures Inspector, agreed to act on behalf of the RMTU on this group. In the meantime the ban is in place and the RMTU is seeking clarification on what certification and/or qualifications are required when supervising scaffolding.

## PORT TAURANGA CASUALS DISPUTE SETTLES

The long running casuals/part timer dispute with the Port of Tauranga was finally resolved in mediation in Hamilton on Wednesday the 25th of June. Our thanks go to our Legal Rottweiler Geoff Davenport for his help and guidance throughout the dispute. The three casuals who no longer work for POT were extremely grateful to the RMTU and its members for backing the case to the hilt and for putting our money where our mouth is. We wish Craig Malpas, Barry Huxtable and Peter Cooper all the best for

their future endeavours for sticking to his principles and beliefs.

## LAUNCH OF THE UNION MOVEMENT'S GET OUT AND VOTE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

CTU Get out and Vote aims to mobilise the hundreds of thousands of people who enrol but don't vote – 31% of enrolled voters didn't vote in 2011.

This year you can vote at any time from September 3 through to September 20.

It's easy to sign up with the union movement's Get Out and Vote campaign!

Sign on here to be a volunteer, and talk to talk to workmates, friends and neighbours to ask them to make a pledge to be a voter at this election. We'll be in touch with the resources you need (like pledge cards and information leaflets) and let you know about events in your area and ideas for things to share on social media – so you can help us Get Out and Vote!

### ARE YOU A VOTER?

Even if you aren't able to volunteer, we want you to make a pledge to be a voter at this year's election. Make a pledge to be a voter (make sure you're enrolled to vote too). We'll make sure you have all the information you need about where and when to vote.

*Authorised by Helen Kelly, NZCTU, Level 7, 178 Willis Street, Wellington*

## PORT NELSON CA UPDATE

The RMTU negotiating team has met PNL on five separate days over the last seven weeks, these negotiations have progressed well and we can expect the terms of settlement to be drafted in the near future and a report back and ratification meeting organised for early August. At this stage we are still waiting for PNL to ratify the proposed settlement prior to organising the members meeting.

## MIDDLETON YARD WORKERS JUST SAY 'NO'

After a discussion at the KiwiRail Freight Industrial Council it became clear that the rule regarding Line of Sight and positioning 'at or near the head of the movement' during shunting was being honoured more in the breach than the observance at Middleton Yard.

At a staff meeting called by managers on 26 June our members were adamant said couldn't observe the rule with fewer than 3 men in a gang given the geography and amount of traffic being marshalled and shunted at Middleton and LPC. Citing the 'just say no to unsafe work' message, the members unanimously voted that if the rule wasn't going to change they would need three men gangs forthwith or they were not going to do the work. This certainly put management on the spot as they were telling the RMTU that they would have to cancel trains by 2nd July as the staffing to man up to 3 man gangs was unavailable.

Discussions between management and delegates clarified matters in the next few days. It is clear that the rule as it is written is unworkable in certain locations and at certain times depending on geography and workload.

The upshot is that an agreement has been struck that there will be three man gangs operating on the LPC Port shunt and in certain parts of Middleton Yard. Also, both local management and delegates agree that the rules surrounding Alternative Shunting Procedures need to be reviewed at national level urgently, and preferably before within a couple of weeks. In the meantime, it was made clear that as long as line of sight is maintained no one will be disciplined or otherwise sanctioned under the 'at or near the head of the movement' provision as this is so ambiguous as to be nonsensical.

Two lessons from this episode: firstly, whilst a review of rules and procedures is long overdue, it needed members to make a stand before management acknowledged it



needs to happen quickly; secondly, just say no to unsafe work!

### C3 MOUNT

With the downturn in the log trade, C3 will be conducting a market led strategic review of its business and there will be consultation with the RMTU over any changes that may come out of the Review.

We would like to thank Andy O'Callaghan, one of our Mount log delegates who has resigned from his employment with C3 for his contribution to the RMTU.

### MORE ASSET SALE SLUSH FUND SPENDING REVEALED

Rather than paying down National's record \$60 billion debt as promised, Budget documents reveal the asset sale money is still being used as a Government slush fund, Labour's State-Owned Enterprises spokesperson Clayton Cosgrove says.

"It is outrageous the public were kept in the dark about what hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars raised from selling the family silver has been spent on.

The grab-bag of spending identified in the documents includes:

- A marine operator safety system
- A \$23 million subscription to the World Bank
- 'Cashing up' private sector R&D losses for Inland Revenue
- Census 2018
- The TVNZ archive
- Capital work for Parliamentary Services
- Implementing the Insolvency Practitioners Bill
- Paying for the IRD to comply with the US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act
- Fixing the Aratere ferry

"The Government conveniently neglected to identify these items in the May Budget documents.

**KEEP  
OUR  
ASSETS**

"Bill English and Tony Ryall need to come clean over where this money has gone.

"Another insult revealed in the documents is that because asset sales came in well over a billion dollars short of target, the Government was advised to ensure its spending was justified. It was encouraged to defend it to the taxpayer as value for money.

"Yet Treasury found the initiatives had 'little alignment with improving economic growth'.

"The truth is asset sales are being used to cover up the \$4 billion-plus hole in revenue caused by the Government's 2010 tax changes.

"The asset sales programme was an economic disaster which is still costing taxpayers billions and delivering little in return," Clayton Cosgrove says.

### TRANSDEV ROM

Through the discussions last year to transfer 66 LE's to Transdev a difference in Pay rates was identified. After regular discussions Transdev have given the RMTU a proposal that if accepted will see our LE's members move onto the KiwiRail ROM and deliver a new pay scale which will enable members to achieve Special 7 in 22yrs. Voting papers are being sent out from RMTU Head Office and if ratified all LE's will move on the scale to reflect years of service driving.

To date DMU only qualified LE's have not been able to move into the special grades. This offer includes the \$6.30 per fortnight laundry allowance and pay rates will be backdated to July 1st 2014. The feedback is very positive with our members looking forward to voting being concluded.

### THREE PROPERTY MARKETS

Over the past couple of years the residential market has developed into three distinct tiers. You have Auckland, with growing house prices, led by strong population growth, due to both internal and external immigration. Christchurch has an active market, with both house prices and rents

increasing, due to the large rebuilding programme. In the rest of the country, house prices remain largely flat with little growth. This trend, particularly in Auckland, is likely to continue. Most countries around the globe generally have one city, called a primate city, that is several times bigger than the next largest. This is happening with Auckland.

## CHAMPION COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

On 3 July the Champion membership rejected the measly pay offer put on the table by Champion's negotiators, and we all return to the bargaining table on Friday 21st August.

## KIWISAVER'S 7TH BIRTHDAY SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF

"KiwiSaver celebrates its seventh birthday on 1 July with 2.3 million people now enrolled, making it the most popular retirement saving scheme in New Zealand history, Labour's Finance spokesperson David Parker says.

"KiwiSaver is yet another forward-thinking Labour policy that National vociferously opposed at the time but now supports through gritted teeth.

"On a day when there's something to celebrate it's sad National has to resort to myth-making and scare tactics regarding Labour's capital gains tax (CGT) and KiwiSaver.

"Labour's CGT will not increase the level of taxation on incomes derived from KiwiSaver or other retirement savings schemes.

"In fact, it is National that is guilty of increasing taxes on KiwiSaver. It slashed the member tax credit in half and imposed a tax on employer contributions.

"Rather than petty tinkering, Labour will build on our past successes by incrementally upping employer and employee contributions to a total of 9 per cent. We will also extend the KiwiSaver member tax credit and KickStart payment to virtually all employees by introducing universal KiwiSaver.

"All National can do is reheat old policies and pretend they are new.

"Labour is the party of innovative and fresh ideas that will help all New Zealanders get ahead," David Parker says.

## INSURANCE CHANGES

Homeowners now realise that obtaining household insurance takes longer and is a more complex process than what it was, just a few years ago. When purchasing a new house, insurance should be obtained early on, in the process. It should not be left to the day of settlement. Insurers now are asking for electrician's certificates for older dwellings. This may require a physical inspection.

Full replacement insurance has gone. You now have to detail the exact insurance quantum you require. A number of insurance companies and brokers have good websites to assist you here. If you are obtaining a registered valuation on your property, ask your valuer to include a separate breakdown for insurance purposes.

## TRANSDEV LEAVE SCHEDULE

A series of meetings will be run by Transdev management to explain a Leave Schedule that is to be introduced at Transdev for the Locomotive Engineers and Train Managers. After completing consultation last year a working party was established to develop a working model as Transdev maintained their position that a Leave Schedule is essential to them to effectively manage leave. A document that was produced from a previous attempt at a leave schedule in 2008 became the focus of the working party, where the proposal now is to schedule 3 weeks leave per year and the members get to nominate which weeks on a first in basis, away from 2 blocks of 2 weeks which the company set out in their draft proposal. All LE's and TM's should attend one of the meetings so they hear the explanation first hand and this is the forum to ask questions and voice any concerns.

## UNIONS VOW TO TACKLE AMAZON'S 'ANTI-WORKER CULTURE'

Representatives of trade unions from key Amazon market countries will meet in Berlin tomorrow and Thursday to examine the online retailer's reported mistreatment of its workforce and its anti-union stance.

The unions – all members of the ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) and UNI Global Union – are thoroughly assessing the situation in Germany, where the ver.di union is organising union membership in major locations throughout the country. Unions will develop strategies for increasing worker representation across Amazon, including in Poland and the Czech Republic, where the company is planning to open five more distribution centres.

UNI Global Union head of commerce, Alke Boessiger, said: "The union movement does not accept the Amazon model for the new economy, where workers are treated as robots, precarious work is the norm, and public funds are misused, while profits are siphoned out the host country to avoid taxes. We saw in Germany and France that unionised Amazon workers are prepared to stand up to Amazon. Jeff Bezos and his cronies are mistaken if they think they can run roughshod over the unions in Poland, the Czech Republic as part of their eastward expansion plan. The global union movement will stand with these unions in their struggle for decent work and conditions for Amazon employees."

Ingo Marowsky, ITF global head – supply chain and logistics, explained: "UNI and the ITF are experienced in dealing with multinational retail as well as delivery companies. Just recently we proved to DHL, for example, that corporate responsibility has to include good industrial relations, and due diligence processes must include industrial relations. Amazon should listen to such stories and learn from them."

Head of UNI Post & Logistics, Stephen DeMatteo concluded: "The global supply-chain and delivery model are changing. Companies such as Amazon and DHL have a major role to play in setting responsible and sustainable standards in delivery and logistics. However, if they do not act responsibly to their workforce there is a danger we will enter another Dark Age for workers. The labour movement will take a stand against any unacceptable economic model being developed to maximise profits at the expense of human dignity."

## TRANSDEV LECMS

The RMTU is scheduled to meet with Transdev on Tuesday morning July 8th as Transdev are proposing to introduce a new LE Competency Management System (CMS). So far there has been very differing reports about the content of this document and how it will be applied, the RMTU has provided a



list of questions we are seeking answers to as the lack of information has led many members becoming very concerned on how this will impact them and will all this documentation really make them better drivers and help to reduce

SPADs. The documentation has been largely developed by Sue Jeffords who has been brought in from Australia in an attempt to understand and reduce SPAD's. As this is a Transdev initiative the RMTU will be requesting that Transdev management lead a series of Roadshow meetings to explain the CMS to all LE's who will be affected by this change.

## TRANSPORT UPGRADES AN INSULTING ELECTION BRIBE PAID BY ASSET SALES

It's an insult for the National Party to offer regional families their roading upgrades as an election bribe funded by the asset sales slush fund, when investing in the local roading network should come out of operational budgets as part of the normal process of prioritising transport investment, the Green Party said today.



The Government has today announced a \$212 million investment in 14 regional roading projects, funded through the Government's Future Investment Fund, which holds the proceeds from the sale of state-owned assets.

"This Government is using John Key's asset sales slush fund to pay for an election bribe for the regions," said Green Party Co-leader Dr Russel Norman.

"Investment in transport should be made through a rational assessment of transport priorities, but this Government has let their obsession with their pet 'Roads of National Significance' (RONS) projects leave regional roads underfunded.

"National has been underfunding local roading in favour of a handful of uneconomic highway projects, leaving local councils to take on more debt to try and deal with the problem.

"National's obsession with the RONS projects has come at the cost of under-investment in local roads and public transport.

"Now the Government has the gall to use the money from selling New Zealanders' assets to bribe the regions with much needed investment in local roads.

"They should have been a priority from the start.

"It's a bit of an insult to the people in the regions to tell them that their regional transport improvements will only be funded as an election bribe out of the asset sale slush fund, rather than paying for them out of the normal operating budget as used to be the case.

"Too bad for those regions that also have desperate transport needs but which Key isn't blessing with cash as part of an election year bribe. It is classic pork barrelling.

"The Green Party would invest the transport budget where it is needed – in maintaining local roads and improving public transport", said Dr Norman.



## BRIDGES MUST ACT TO BAN IMPORTATION OF ASBESTOS

The CTU is calling on Minister Simon Bridges to act on the eve of Mesothelioma\* Day (\*Mesothelioma is a cancer caused by exposure to asbestos fibres).

"Today in Parliament, MP Andrew Little tabled an asbestos containing product which was able to be easily purchased over the counter from a retail store. Minister Bridges commented that "The Ministry for the Environment is doing an inventory" of asbestos containing products – but we don't need a list – we need a ban!" CTU President, Helen Kelly said.

"Minister Bridges can and should act to ban the importation of this deadly substance – our nation's biggest workplace killer with an estimated 170 deaths annually and that this will rise to over 300 as the results of the 'asbestos boom' of the 1970s take their toll – the same as the road toll. Workers are being

exposed to a deadly substance and paying the ultimate price. This is unacceptable." Kelly said.

There is an easy fix. Today in Parliament Minister Bridges said that "this is a complex matter... we have a sufficient regime currently in place". We do not accept this, and the hundreds of people who are signing our petition calling on a ban on asbestos containing products agree." Kelly said.

## THE KIC 22 UPDATE

The last meeting was held at the Woburn Training Centre, 18-19 June. As usual the KIC had a full agenda and it is recognised there are still issues with the minutes getting finalised and distributed. We have firm commitment from KR that the KIC 22 minutes will be sent out in the next two weeks. Some of the agenda items include –

- Car Driving ( LE's ), discussion linked to two recent accidents.
- Safety Observation processes – trialling new protocols.

- Automatic coupler / Transition head update
- SPAD mitigation strategies / ideas e.g. – Signal Calling / Controlled Approach Speeds
- CT Progression update.
- Cab Radio update

There was also a brief combined meeting with the Mechanical Industrial Council on day 2 to discuss KR's decision to standardise hi viz colours to orange and the Uniform/PPE review that is underway.

## PORT MARLBOROUGH CA UPDATE

There have been two negotiations meeting days to date with a third organised for Thursday 10th August. Talks are progressing.

## MINISTER FAILS TO LEARN FROM CLASS SIZE DEBACLE

Hekia Parata has learnt nothing from two years of public outcry and still believes class sizes don't matter, Labour's Education spokesperson Chris Hipkins says.

"Class sizes do matter. Ask any parent and they will tell you they want their kids in smaller classes. Labour has listened.

"Increasing teacher quality and smaller class sizes are not mutually exclusive. Having more time to spend with their pupils means teachers have more time to reflect on their practise, undertake professional development and spend on kids who are falling behind.

"Labour believes teachers must have the opportunity to become the best they can be. That is why we will set up an advisory service to provide mentors and share best practise. We will also raise teaching standards by pre-screening entry into initial teacher education programmes. And we will also enable resources spent forcing National Standards on schools to be redirected into teacher professional development programmes.

"A Labour Government will raise the quality of all teachers. National's executive principals policy would hand-pick a few people and pay them more. We want to

increase the quality of teaching and school leadership across the board.

"Virtually everybody agrees smaller class sizes have a positive impact on learning. Any dispute is simply about the magnitude of that impact.

"Only Labour has a comprehensive package to modernise education in New Zealand. We will upgrade the way students learn, up-skill teachers and renew outdated school buildings. We will also give schools the opportunity to end the 'voluntary' donations which divide school communities.

"A Labour Government is committed to a modern, affordable and quality public education system," Chris Hipkins says.

## LET'S BE SAFE OUT THERE & REMEMBER.....

- Maintain situational awareness at all times;
- Ensure all are aware of the work to be performed;
- Make safety your first priority;
- Make sure you will go home safe and sound at the end of your shift;
- Make sure your workmate will go home safe and sound at the end of their shift;
- Do not allow yourself to be distracted.
- Do not make assumptions

**We're  
Stronger  
Together!**

